



Tips For Parents to Help Their Disabled Child Transition From High School to Postsecondary Programs

- Be sure that testing evaluations are up to date and obtain a copy of all special testing records before high school graduation. These records are valuable in establishing the need for disability support services to students.
- Contact your local Department of Vocational Rehabilitation. They can provide a variety of services to eligible students with disabilities and can assist in job placement after vocational education programs are completed.
- Have a good understanding of the amount of help your child is receiving in school. It is important to know the depth of support your child requires and what is needed.
- Some schools have classes or programs in study skills and time management. If offered at your child's school, encourage him or her to take them. These skills will be important as they continue in technical training programs.
- Help your child increase their independent living skills. Help them manage their own checking accounts, do their own laundry, cleaning, etc.
- Encourage part-time jobs, volunteer experiences, these are helpful to improve socialization skills as well as give a better understanding of work situations and expectations.
- Help your child understand their disability and be able to articulate their strengths and areas of improvement as well as compensating techniques and accommodations that work best for them.
- Help them to understand how their disability may be connected to social experiences with peers, families, and others.
- Encourage them to be self-advocates. A first step is the ability to discuss their disability and the accommodations that they need.
- Contact the advisors or counselors at the school regarding vocational-technical programs and support services before applying.
- Visit the school or campus and arrange for opportunities to shadow another student already enrolled to see what it is like at the school.
- Inquire as to whether there are special orientations or transition programs for new students with disabilities.
- Encourage your child to have their own membership in disability organizations. This will help them keep informed about new resources and aids that may help them in their education.
- Make sure it is your student's choice to enroll in the program. Personal interest and motivation are valuable fuels for the extra hours preparing and studying that lie ahead.

Source: *Tools for Teaming*, Office of the State Director for Career and Technical Education, Hawaii.